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III.—NOTE ON THE HISPERICA FAMINA.

I venture to think that the papers of Geyer in the *Archiv für Lateinische Lexicographie* (II 255), of Stowasser (III 168), of Thurneysen (III 546), and the recent paper by Prof. Robinson Ellis (*Journal of Philology*, No. 56), have rendered the task of ascertaining the meaning of much that was unexplained in the *Hisperica Famina* much easier than before.

The text which, for the present, must be held to be authoritative is that of Stowasser in the "*Dreizehnter Jahresbericht über das K. K. Franz-Joseph-Gymnasium*" (Vienna, 1887). This work is very hard to procure; but after much trouble I succeeded in getting a copy lent me by Mr. Stevenson, of St. John's College, Oxford, and have thus been able to use Stowasser's text. In 1893 appeared "*Nennius Vindictus*" by Zimmer (Berlin, Weidmannsche Buchhandlung); the "*Anhang*" to this work is an essay "on the *Hisperica Famina*, and other S. W. British records of the 6th century." Zimmer throws much light on the history and the contents of this extraordinary piece of ecclesiastical euphuism. He arrives at the conclusion that it is the work of a British monk in S. W. Britain about the sixth century. Stowasser conceived it to be the work of an Irish monk, and Geyer thought that the work was produced in Spain. A perusal of Zimmer's chapter proves, I think, convincingly that his theory is right. The few notes here appended are intended to supplement those given in the edition of Stowasser and the references are to his text.

I have translated the first three chapters and have added a few notes on a few difficult passages.

The work seems to be an attempt by a monk to show off his learning to the world, and must not be taken as representing any Latin style prevailing at any period. He coins new Latin words and borrows at large from Greek and Hebrew. He seems to have modelled his cadences on the so-called "golden lines" of the Roman poets, employed by them to close a period with special gravity, as Vergil's *Impiaque aeternam timuerunt saecula noctem*. The paucity of Celtic words is striking. The transition from

classical to vulgar Latin forms is seen in *oleda* for *olida*; in words like *spatha* for *gladius*; and the use of words like *ceteri* answering to *alii* seems to point to an imperfect knowledge of classical Latin.

The first three chapters, which I have translated, seem to contain the following train of thought:

"1. I have fallen in with a company of rhetoricians and I rejoice at it, but I check my joy and give rein to my wonder. Whither are they bent, and what mean they to discuss? Questions of peace, or war? or will they describe a shipwreck or a battle? In any case I am as good as they are, and I challenge any one of them.

"2. These rhetoricians profess to speak the purest Latin, a Latin as pleasant to hear as the hum of bees. They are a choice and rare company; but sometimes they will meet with a blockhead dull as a tortoise, who would paralyse them unless they averted this crisis by a prayer—Would that I were only a master of pure Italian Latin, I would utter a flood of classical utterance—(ac-costing one of the company) what is the special task to which you are addressing yourself? Are you going to turn builder, smelter or maybe fluteplayer?

"3. Ah! I can divine it now! You are coming to your own home! You follow with your gaze the well-known flocks and are dressed in holiday attire—You bid farewell to wise disquisitions (*sed* (28) should be *nec*, or else the word seems used in a strange sense). Hence I see that you long for your home, which is brightened up at your approach: your mother, your children, await you: all is gay at your home-coming."

Much of the diction of the author of the *Hisperica Famina* resembles that of the grammarian Virgilius Maro. An excellent commentary upon Cap. 1 of *Hisperica Famina* is afforded by Maro, *Epistolae* p. 138 Edit. Huemer. "De his formis uerborum inter Regulum Cappadocum et Sedulum Romanum non minima quaestio habita est, quae usque ad gladiatorum pene conflictum pervenit. Quindecim namque noctibus totidemque simul diebus insomnes et indapes mansere, tribus militibus utrimque sumptis." But much of the diction of Maro resembles that of our author: e. g. his use of *palare* = *revelare*.

The inflated language may be paralleled by the mock euphuism of Sir Piercie Shafton in the "Monastery", e. g. "Marry, and I am glad of it, young Audacity (I will call you my Audacity,

and you will call me your Condescension, while we are on these terms of unnatural Equality), I am glad of your ignorance with all my heart. For we martialists proportion the punishments which we inflict upon our opposites to the length and hazard of the efforts wherewith they oppose themselves to us. And I see not why you, being but a tyro, may not be held sufficiently punished for your outrecuidance and orgillous presumption, by the loss of an ear, an eye, or even a finger, accompanied by some fleshwound of depth and severity suited to your error."

Text of Chs. 1, 2, 3:—

1. *Ampla pectoralem suscitatur vernia cavernam, mestum extrico pulmone tonstrum, sed gaudifluam pectoreis arto procellam arthereis, cum insignes sophiae speculator arcatores, qui egregiam urbani tenoris propinant faucibus linpham vipereosque litteraturae plasmant syllogismos. Cui mundano triquadrae telluris artico rhetorum florigera flectit habenas caterva et qui remota vasti fundaminis deseruere competa? Utrum fabulosas per ora depromunt gazas? Num trucida altercaminum (M. 480) inter soboles pubescunt litigia? An placorea abucat proles sceptrum?*

Utrum saevus armatorum coetus toxica corrui certandi in acie, ut fusis ostrei cruoris vivis candida olivarent madiada? Seu spumaticum bombosi tithis flustrum inertes oppressit naufragis remiges? An horridum communi stragi vapuit acculas letum? Quos edocetis fastos? Quique adheretis rhetori? Hinc lectorum sollertem invito obello certatorem, qui sophicam plantaverit avide palestram. Et trinos antea dimicavi athletas, inertes mac-tavi duelles ac robustos multavi coaevos fortioresque prostavi in acie ciclopes. Hinc nullum subterfugio aequaezum. Dum truculenta me vellicant spicula, protinus versatilem evagino spatham, quae almas trucidat statuas. Arboream capto iduma peltam, quae carneas cluit tutamine pernas. Ferralem vibro pugionem, cuius pitheum assiles macerat rostrum cidones, ob [hoc] cunctos lastro in agone coaevos.

2. *Haec compta dictaminum fulget sparsio, at nullos vitioso aggere glomerat logos, ac sospitem lecto libramine artat vigorem et aequali plasmamine, mellifluam populans ausonici faminis per guttura sparginem, velut innumera apium concavis discurrunt examina apiastris melchillentaque sorbillant fluentia alveariis, ac solitos stemicant rostris favos. Hic comptus arcatorum exomicat coetus, cui dudum (M. 481) per lapsa temporum stadia parem non*

crevimus phalangem nec futura temporalis globi per pagula aequiparatam fulgidi rumoris speculabimur catervam. Sed praesto horrendus asstat chelidrus, qui talem vipereo ictu sauciat biturbam, nisi vasti exigerint rectorem poli, qui florigerum agmen reguloso solverit discrimine. Novello temporei globaminis cyclo hispericum arripere tonui sceptrum; ob hoc rudem stemico logum ac exiguus serpit per ora rivus. Quod si amplo temporalis aevi stadio ausonica me alligasset catena, sonoreus faminis per guttura popularet haustus ac immensus urbani tenoris manasset faucibus tollus. Quod propriferum plasmas orgium? Utrum alma scindis securibus robora, uti eo quadrigona densis stemicares oratoria tabulatis? An flammigero coctas obrizum clibano, auríferas solidis cudere lunulas marthellis? Seu tinolam tensis suscitās odam chordis? Forte concavas sonoreis proflās cicutas harmoniis?

3. Sed non intelligibili mentis acumine praestulor, quod lanigeras odorosa observas per pascua bidentium turmas, qui obessa arcatorum assiduo tramite sectaris concilia, ac cicniam gemellis bai[u]llas curvanam scapulīs, rutulantem alboreis artas calamidem madiadis, pexamque carnis tolībus amplecteris camisiām. Nec sophica ingenioso acumine auscultas mysteria, sed doctoreas effeto conamine comitaris historum turmas. Hinc mirificum tibi ingenioso (M. 482) libramine palo consultum, proprigenum natalis fundi irruere solum, ut agrica robusto gestu plasmaveris orgea, et pantia [.] raptis astant septa termopili. Pubescentes pecorea depascunt segetes agmina, veternas mesta genitrix lacrimosis obugat genas guttis, et infantilis mu[r]murat in [.] vagitus, ac florigera resonat clangore per arva. Externum proprifera editrix abucat marem placoreasque blandis concelebrant nuptias thalamis. Haec pantia natalem te stignant orgea adire limitem.

Translation of Chs. 1, 2, 3:—

1. A vast joy makes my heart throb to its depths. I dismiss bewildered sorrow from my vitals, but I repress a current of glee in the veins of my heart, when I look at the renowned repositories of wisdom, who administer the precious draught of city life, and who patch up poisonous potpourris of literature: to whatever region¹ of the three-cornered land is the flowery throng of

¹ The meaning seems to be 'whither are these rhetoricians going?' If this was written in Britain the *triquadra tellus* may refer to that island.

rhetoricians turning its course? and who are these virtuosos who have turned their backs on the lonesome tracks of the waste earth's end? are they dispensing the rich treasures of their talk for the public? Can it be that the deadly strife of controversy is waxing strong among this brood? Or does this assembly call for the sceptre of peace? Does a savage gathering of armed warriors muster eager for the wild line of battle, to stain white bodies with dark runnels of purple blood? Or has the creaming tide of echoing Tithis whelmed the exhausted rowers in a wreck? Or has some grim death carried off their neighbours in a common disaster? What stories are you preaching? And to which rhetorician give you your allegiance? To this literary duel¹ I challenge the champion who to his satisfaction has trodden a school of wisdom. And I have before now defied three athletes together; I have trounced cowardly combatants and I have pounded stout fighters of my own age, and have knocked down giants, stronger than myself, in battle. So I shun to meet no one of my own age. While their savage arrows prick me, straightway I unsheathe my handy sword which kills those complacent dummies. I clutch with my hand my white² target which defends the flesh of my legs with its shelter. I brandish my dagger of iron whose venomous beak makes mincemeat of the lathy tricksters.³ I break up⁴ all my coevals in a fight.

2. This precious shower of words glitters, by no awkward barriers confining the diction, and husbands its strength by an exquisite balance and by equable device, trilling sweet descant of Ausonian speech through the speaker's throat⁵ by this shower of words passing through Latin throats⁶; just as countless swarms of bees go here and there in their hollow hives, and sip the honey streams in their homes and set in order, as they are wont, their combs with their beaks. Here the precious collection of

¹ Obellum = avellum. Explained by Götz, *Thes. Gl.*, as bellum civile dum in duas partes dividitur. See Ellis, *Journal of Philology*, p. 210.

² I read 'alboream' for 'arboream'.

³ Pitheus is explained by S. after Rhÿs as derived from the dragon Pytho, and so poisonous. I take cidon = κίδων, a subst. connected with κίδαφος. Vide L. and Scott s. v.

⁴ Lastro = lastrico.

⁵ I read 'pipitans'.

⁶ I. e., those *rhetores* who should speak good Latin prefer an Euphuistic jargon.

closet-writers coruscates: we have never seen a phalanx to match it in the stages of past time, nor shall we in the future limits¹ of this contemporary world gaze on a similar crowd so showy and so bustling. But mark the horrid deaf-adder at hand, who shall wound this crowd with his poisonous dart, unless they can dethrone the ruler of the spacious heaven, who (there) might free yon flowery troop from its perils from snakes.²

Only in this last cycle of our temporal globe, I have tried to seize the sceptre of the western land; hence it is that the parlance which I compose is untutored, and hence the current of words which from my mouth flows scanty.

If, however, for a longer space of time the Italian chain had riveted me, then a resonant wave of speech would run wild³ and a boundless torrent of refined language should have come sweeping from my jaws. (Here, I take it, the speaker addresses himself to one of the rhetoricians.) What particular work are you designing? Are you cleaving the gentle oaks with axes, that you may construct square chapels with solid planks? Or are you heating pure gold in fiery furnace, to forge golden crescents with stout hammers? Or are you raising some harmonious tune and stringing the chords? Or chances it that you are filling the hemlock reeds with your harmonies of sound?

3. But I am remarking with a most transcendent keenness that you are observing the woolly flocks of sheep ranging over the fragrant pastures; you who pursue with course undeviating the packed meetings of the closet philosophers, and carry a scarlet sunshade over your two shoulders, fitting a red cloak on your white body,⁴ and you clasp to your fleshly frame a blouse of fine linen.⁵ These are no philosophic mysteries to which you are listening, but you are accompanying the learned throng of savants with exhausting efforts. And so I disclose to you my singular

¹ I retain 'pagula' and understand it as = repagula, vide Stowasser ad loc.

² The meaning of this seems to be: "but there is a student as stupid as a chelydrus: against dullness even the gods fight in vain." *Regulosus* is from *regulus*, a kind of snake.

³ If the proper reading be 'popularet' the word must be used absolutely: it is possible that some word like 'pipilaret' may be the real reading,—with the meaning "sound melodiously".

⁴ I read *coccineam gemellis bailas (baiulas) curvanam scapulis, rutulantem (aliter rectulantem) alboreis artans calamida (chlamyda) madiadis*. If *cicniam* = *κύκνειον* the meaning will be 'white'.

⁵ I read 'camisia' for 'camina'.

purpose, balancing my thoughts [this way and that revolving my swift mind], to pass into the domain of your native farm, and see how you have carried out the rustic work with your stout efforts, and all your sheepfolds stand by the gushing (read *rapidis*) warm springs. Your herds of cattle browse the springing crops; your old mother is watering her aged cheeks with dropping tears; and the cry of your children sounds muffled, and echoes its notes over the flowery fields. The dam who claims him summons her spouse: and they keep the pleasant festival of their union by their merry meeting. All these signs bear me witness that you are approaching the eve of your natal day.

Commentary:—

Page 1. line 2. *Tonstrum*: probably from *tono*, in the sense of bewilderment, hence grief: cf. Spanish *tontar*, to bewilder. *Pulmo* seems not used in classical Latin as the seat of other passions than mirth. *Spatham* = Spanish *espada*, *espaza*. 19. *Protinus versatilem evagino spatham quae almas trucidat statuas*. 'Straightway I unsheathe my active sword which cuts down the complacent idiots'. The *statuae* seem to be his empty-headed adversaries; cf. *Iuvenal*, VIII, 52. At tu Nil nisi *Cecropides*, *truncoque simillimus Hermae*. He may even be thinking of the mutilation of the *Hermes* statues. 22. *Cluit* = *cludit*. Cf. Fr. *clôre*. *Assiles cidones*, 'the slender, lathy weaklings'. May not *cidones* be connected with Sp. *chotar*, to suck? Cf. Ital. *ciotto*, a dolt. *Lastro* = *laxico*, I dismember. Cf. *pastrico*, but see note ad verb. in translation below.

2. *Arripere tenui sceptrum*: *Tonui* = *tenui*, in the sense of the French *j'ai tenu à*, I have desired. *Tollus* 'a stream,' perhaps from *tubellus*, but explained by S. as probably from *θολός* *mud*. The meaning of the end of paragraph 2 seems to be 'If I had only more mastery of the *Ausonica lingua* (i. e. good Latin), I would speak more volubly on any subject that might be desired: on any task you might care to make your own; whether to build a chapel, or to work gold, or to sing and play on the flute'.

3. *Cicineam (cicineam) gemellis bailas (= baiulas) curvanam scapulis: rutilantem (aliter rectulantem) alboreis artas calamidem madiadis, pexamque carnis tolibus amplecteris camisiam*. 'You carry a red sunguard over your two shoulders: you fit to you a white cloak over your white limbs and clasp a delicate shirt to your bodily frame'. *Cicineam* probably with *Stowasser* from

cici, the castor oil plant, from whose seeds some dye was extracted, or from κύκνειος.

4. Macides: evidently means 'steeps' or precipices: cf. Sp. macía, a wall. It might mean 'waste lands', and might thus be connected with the Corsican word mâquis used for 'rough forest land'. Veluti rosea aestivi laris veternas cremat pyras rubigine amarcas, ac aruca favellosis minorat robora tumulis—read here *pyra*. 'Even as a ruddy fire burns with a glow the old boughs of larch wood in the summer, and reduces to nothing the uprooted stumps on ashy mounds'. Aruca seems a corruption of eruca from extrun-care: the roots are grubbed out from the low, round hills where they grew. Quatinus vitreum tetigeris patula poli samum cuba. Samus is no doubt the Greek word σάμος, a height: cuba = cupa, the hollow hand, explained by S. as the elbow. Arotus can hardly mean anything but "a star": possibly 'the thrower of light', from arruo. Cf. Sp. arrojar, but more probably from Hebrew orr, "light", pl. orôth, from which word the Latin is taken. So S.

5. Bis senos exploro vechros qui ausonicam lacerant palatham. 'I am tracking out twelve defects which mar the pure diction of the Romans'. So Prof. R. Ellis, no doubt rightly: but none have explained vechros, which undoubtedly means faults, defects: and is to be explained as a Germanic loan-word: OHG brecho, a fault: Vide Kluge s. v. Surely palatham means nothing but palate. Cf. Fr. palais: Sp. paladar, gums. Alius clarifero ortus vechrus solo, quo hispericum reguloso ictu violatur eulogium: sensibiles partiminum corrodit domescas. Stowasser is clearly right in regarding clarifero solo as signifying 'solecisms' from Soli: the clariferus probably refers to the *claras* Asiae urbes, and regulosus is the adjective formed from regulus = basiliscus. Domescas seems to me to = domesticas partes, and to signify the qualities, home-properties: cf. Provençal domesgue. "Another fault arises from the land of sunny Solus, whereby the glory of the Latin language is by a poisonous attack impaired: it spoils the plain properties of the different parts of speech".

6. Cibonea Pliadum non exomicant fulgora. This seems a reference to 'polus dum sidera pascit.' 'The heaven-fed sheen of the Pleiades does not shoot forth'. Exomico seems a hybrid, ξέω and mico. Merseum solifluus eruit nevum tractus. 'The sunny tract drives forth dun colour of night'; merseus is

explained by S. as = nightly, from *mersa*, night; *nevm* used of the colour of the wart or excrescence, "brownness". *Sudos*—from *sudum* which is used by Arnobius in the sense of thick or clotted. *Sennosis motibus* "with movements of their teeth"; *sennosus* is a Latinized form of Hebrew *shen*, a tooth. *Sablones* 'sands' = Sp. *sablon*. Surely *attritas arrigas* means the 'crumbling furrows',—Prov. 'arrega', said to come from a Celtic word *ricâ*; but if with S., *artiga* be read, the word remains in the modern Spanish *artiga*, a fresh ploughed field. For this word Körting s. v. *artica* assumes an Iberian origin. See Körting s. v.

7. *Uchas* may be right; cf. Prov. 'uchar, to cry'; but S. reads *echas* = ἑχάς. *Framis* = *frameis*, here used for 'axes'.

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